

Immanuel Lutheran Church
747 Ann Street
Chadron, NE 6933

COUNCIL MEMBERS

President - Kit Watson
Vice-President - Denise James
Secretary - Sharon Thurlow
Treasurer - Laurie Harris
Building & Grounds - Ericka Lans
Education - Yvonne Moody
Evangelism - Laurie Schmidt
Fellowship - Karleen Gramberg
Social Ministry - Robyn Baquet
Stewardship - Jeanine Mohr
Worship - Julie Duncan
Youth/Young Adult - Alyssa Noble
Pastor - Ann Sundberg

Other Staff –

Financial Secretary – Lorrie Bauer
Custodian – Michelle Haynes
Church Secretary – Erin Daniel

Important contact information-

Nebraska Synod Website:
www.nebraskasynod.org, phone number
402-896-5311
ELCA Church wide Website, www.elca.org,
Phone number 800-638-3522

Treasurer's Report
December 2015

Beginning balance November 30, 2015		\$ (10,720.24)
Income	Weekly Offering	\$ 15,146.04
	Thrivent	\$ 112.00
	Refund	\$ 104.96
	Coffee/Tea	\$ 17.00
	Interest	\$.03
Total Income		\$ 15,380.03
Expenses		\$ 10,002.56
Ending balance as of December 31, 2015		\$ (5,342.77)

Worship Attendance

Date	Sunday Service
December 6	60
December 13	38
December 20	65
December 24 Christmas Eve	92
December 27	18

Congregational Meeting Announcement

The annual meeting of the congregation will take place on Sunday, January 24, following worship. We will gather to conduct the business of our mission center: to elect lay leadership, to approve a mission-focused budget, to review the reports from this past year and to consider what lies ahead for us in 2016.

Please make plans to attend and participate.

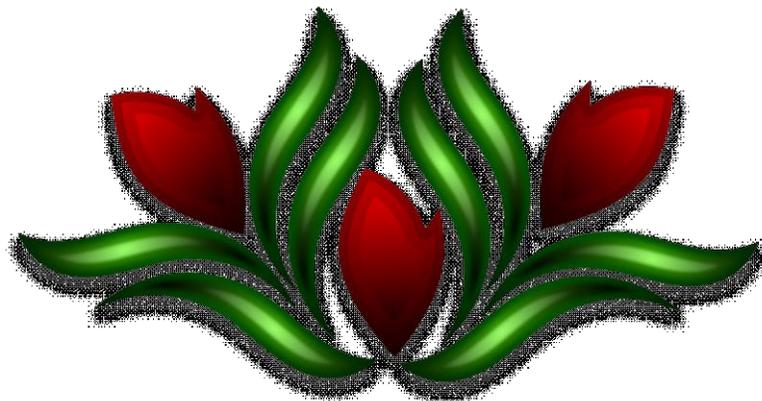
Altar Flowers

The new chart for altar flowers is now going up. Thank all of you for signing up, the flowers are always beautiful. If you have dates in mind that are meaningful to you it is a good idea to sign up early. On the chart you will write what you wish to dedicate the flowers to and that is for office use. I will contact you to find out if you have special requests as to color or type of flowers. The New Leaf is our default flower shop but you do have the option to use Cleo's or furnish your own from your garden. I will contact you but sometimes it is difficult to reach people so when the time gets short I turn in the order as a seasonal arrangement, and that seems to work for most people. I have found that leaving a message on an answering -machine does not always work so I hope you have all noted an e-mail address for the new directory as that works well.

When church is over you may take the arrangement home to enjoy and return the vase to the church when finished. I think leaving it in the kitchen works well for Denise. I try to order flowers several months at a time and that helps me and the florist. You will be sent a post card during your week and you need to do nothing, it is just a reminder. Thank you again and a special thanks for signing up early. We also need to thank Denise for seeing that the flowers are picked up and displayed each Sunday.

Your help in adding bouquets to enhance our worship services is greatly appreciated.

Junice Dagen & the Altar Guild



If you are able to help fill grocery bags after church on a Sunday, there is a guide available inside the pantry for what to include. We appreciate the monetary and food donations from the following:

- Chadron Community Church Pantry
- Chadron Garden Club
- Chadron High School FBLA Club
- Chadron Primary School
- Chadron State College's Communication Arts 239 class, who organized the Oxfam Hunger Banquet
- Chadron United Methodist Church
- Immanuel Quilters
- Our Savior's Lutheran Church
- St. Patrick's Catholic Church and the Knights of Columbus
- ...and dozens of individuals who simply showed up at our doorstep with bags of groceries.

Thank You for the Christmas Program!

Thank you to everyone who helped to make the Christmas program such a glorious and memorable afternoon last Sunday. It is such a joy to see our young people tell the story of Jesus' birth at Bethlehem. Many hands helped to make the program come together. Thanks to all who helped with sets and costumes, gift bags, music, set up, dinner, and clean-up. Thanks to the families for bringing children and grandchildren to rehearsals. And a big thank you to Roger and Lucinda Mays for their artistic production and organization.



The children after the Christmas program telling the story of the Birth of Christ, with narration by the confirmation class and a tremendous amount of help from the parents of the Wednesday School students.

Oxfam Banquets bring Food Insecurities to Life

From the CSC Website

CHADRON – When food is piled high on the Thanksgiving tables of faculty, staff and students who attended the Oxfam Hunger Banquets Monday, they may pause to consider the moment. If so, the intention of Dr. Shaunda French's Communication Arts 239 (CA239) students will have been met, in part. The students hosted the event, a civic engagement requirement for the class, to increase awareness about millions of people in the world who suffer from hunger or food insecurity, not knowing when one will eat next.

Those who participated in the events at 5 and 7 p.m. were given a card with a short bio describing the person they were representing and a socio-economic standing of high, medium or low class, reflecting the proportions of the world's population at each level.

It quickly became evident the majority were low class, sitting on the floor in the center of the room. About 20 people role played middle class individuals seated at bare tables along the wall. Finally, 10 high class individuals were at a single dining table complete with multiple courses of food and linen napkins and servers.

The annual income ranges for the three groups were under \$1,000 and under, \$1,000-\$6,000 and over \$6,000.

The meal was rice and water for the low class, rice, beans and water for the middle class, and a full meal for the high class.

Pastor Ann Sundberg of Immanuel Lutheran Church, keynote speaker, said about 13 percent of Nebraska residents experience food insecurity and the percentage is higher in Dawes County.

"Nearly half of Chadron's school children qualify for free or reduced lunch," she said.

Sundberg added that college students, senior citizens, those who've lost jobs, have high medical bills, experienced a death in the family, divorce or domestic violence can also become food insecure.

She reviewed food pantry options in Chadron, including a backpack program used to send food home with children for the weekends and thanked the banquet participants for attending the "metaphor for the inequality of the world."

Robert Ricks of Douglas, Wyoming, said his low class dining experience was eye-opening.

"It was pretty cool being a part of this experiment and to show how many people are affected by poverty and hunger. I think everybody should have to go through this experience to actually open their eyes," he said.

Dr. Yvonne Moody, Family and Consumer Sciences professor, agreed the evening was a valuable and thought-provoking exercise.

"A simulation like this really does bring the point home in a visual way so that we can truly feel that set of extremes from one side to the other and imagine ourselves in a different situation," she said.

In addition to increasing awareness about hunger issues, CA239 class members invited participants to do something about the problem by joining Oxfam or volunteering at a soup kitchen or food pantry.

Banquet participants donated more than 300 items to the food pantry at the Immanuel Lutheran Church.

—Tena L. Cook, Marketing Coordinator

In the past several months, there has been an outpouring of support for the Shepherd's Pantry. The Pantry continues to provide non-perishable groceries to anyone in Chadron who needs food assistance.

Clients can call once every 30 days, and either come and pick up groceries or have them delivered.

Immanuel Lutheran Church Council minutes

December 3, 2015

Present were: Robyn Baquet, Karleen Gramberg, Denise James, Ericka Lans, Jeanie Mohr, Yvonne Moody, Laurie Schmidt, Pastor Ann Sundberg, President Kit Watson and Sharon Thurlow. Those absent were Julie Duncan, Laurie Harris, and Alyssa Noble.

It was moved by Robyn Baquet and seconded by Kit Watson to accept the secretary's minutes. It was moved by Karleen Gramberg and seconded by Laurie Schmidt to accept the treasurer's report.

Pastor's report: Pastor spent the month of November with worship services at Immanuel, Prairie Pines and Crestview, Wednesday School, Confirmation. She also met for Campus Ministry supper. Fall feast was on November 15th. She has also participated with the Community Choir concert, the ecumenical thanksgiving service and many other activities.

Executive Committee: Council participated in a Congregational Vitality Assessment. (results will be known at a later day). Church cleaning will be December 5th at 9 am. Hanging of the greens is December 6th following worship. December 13 Campus Ministry to be prepared by Kit Wason. The Christmas program will be December 20th. Caroling party is December 22 at 5:30. Bring your voices and be prepared to make a joyful noise. There will be one service on Christmas Eve at 5:30.

Building and Grounds: Clean the church on December 5 @ 9 AM.

Education: Wednesday school is averaging 20 children. Volunteers are needed for the Christmas program on December 20th.

Evangelism: Campus Ministry dinner is being prepared and served by Kit Watson. Volunteers are needed to serve the meal once a month. Let a council member know if you are interested. There is a small group meeting on Tuesdays and they are studying "Animate Faith." The adult Sunday school class will prepare the Santa bags for the Christmas program.

The Highway 20 sign saga continues with the forms being sent to the State for approval.

Fellowship: Christmas program is December 20th with the Wednesday School kids. The Fall Feast was a success.

Social: The Shepard's Pantry is full. Many thanks to all who have donated. Our next time to serve at Closer to Home is December 21st.

Stewardship: Work is in progress on the church directory. Contact Jeanie Mohr if you haven't submitted or had your picture taken.

Worship: There will be only one Christmas Eve service at 5:30 PM. Sunday, December 27 will be a service of Lessons and Carols to be led by Julie Duncan.

New Business: The nominating committee will be calling people to fill a position on the council. There are some positions needing to be filled. Feel free to contact them if you would like to be nominated.

The next meeting will be January 14, 2016, in order to give the executive committee time in early January to work on the budget for next year.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Thurlow

Pastor's Message

“What has come into being through him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness does not overcome it.” -- John 1:4-5

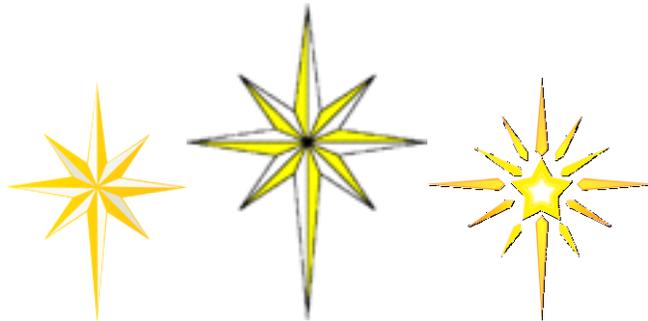
It may not be noticeable at the beginning of January, but by the end of the month it will be apparent that the days are growing longer. There will be more light as the earth makes its turn and the northern hemisphere begins to tilt toward the sun.

Light is the primary symbol of the season of Epiphany. We put away the evergreens of Christmas and place candelabras in the sanctuary. Each Sunday dozens of candles blaze, filling the space with their light. Light is one of the primary symbols in the Gospel of John. Those who recognize Jesus as the Son of God see the light that he brings – the light that cannot be overcome by darkness.

The times we live in seem to be dark with violence, terrorism, conflict and violence. How is that different from the time and place into which Jesus was born? Jesus was born to a poor family living in an occupied territory. Jesus' own family became refugees in order to escape the violence and slaughter that had been ordered by the king. (Matthew 2:13-23)

Every year we celebrate Jesus' birth into our world – into the chaos and the messiness and the conflict. He comes into our own lives, into all our neediness and imperfection, shining light into deepest darkness so that we can see and recognize God's infinite love for every single one of us.

Light is the gift of Epiphany. Light is the gift of God's creation. Light is the gift of God's own Son. Light is the gift of God's never-ending love. Where do you see the light of Christ?



GRACEVINE

January 2016



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Pastor Ann Sundberg

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Where God is with us as we grow in faith!